as no doubt may be an important feature of cerebral activities.

GaskelTs Para-Matter

In a book published in 1928 (entitled *What Is Life?}* a lady whose name is not otherwise known to me, Augusta Gaskell, has published an ingenious and, I think, novel speculation on the nature of living things. I am confirmed in my opinion that this deserves notice in our concise review of theories by the fact that it is warmly commended in two introductions written respectively by a physicist and a biologist, both of recognized eminence, Professors K. T. Compton and R. Pearl.

The thesis of the book is very concisely stated by Compton in his introduction, as follows : [c] protons and electrons, in addition to forming by their various known combinations the ninety-two kinds of atoms, are also able to unite in combinations of a type as yet undiscovered and which are the " active " or essential ingredients of living matter'. We may take it that, since Compton has given his high authority to the possibility of such non-material systems of electrons and protons, modern physics finds no insuperable objection to them as possible ingredients of living things. Gaskell speaks of these systems of electrons and protons, composed on a pattern quite other than that of the atoms of matter, as immaterial; and it must be admitted that they might be in many respects very different from matter. She does not attempt to describe their properties. Whether they have weight, impenetrability, cohesion in larger masses, as

fluids or solids, whether they can affect our sense-organs in any fashion ? To these and many other questions she attempts no answers. She does assume that this para-